CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE SEVEN HUNDREDTH PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Friday, 3 March 1995, at 10 a.m.

President: Mrs. Hisami Kurokochi (Japan)

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INDIANA UNIVERSITY

DEPT.

The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 700th plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament.

First of all, allow me to extend, on behalf of the Conference and on my own behalf, a cordial welcome to His Excellency the Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Ambassador André Erdös, who will address the Conference today. His presence among us today is greatly appreciated and I am sure we all await his statement with interest.

I also have on my list of speakers the representatives of Norway and Indonesia. Once we have gone through the list of speakers, I intend to take up for decision the request by Kazakhstan to participate in our work.

Before giving the floor to the speakers inscribed for today, I should like, with your indulgence, to make a few opening remarks as Japan takes over the presidency of the Conference.

At the outset, allow me to express my appreciation to my predecessor, Ambassador Vattani of Italy, and all other delegations who have welcomed me so kindly into their midst and for the greetings extended to me. Having assumed my duties as representative of Japan and President of the Conference only a short while ago, I am fully conscious of the challenges ahead of me. I am confident that my task will be made lighter in the knowledge that I can depend on the advice, cooperation and assistance of my predecessor, the incoming President, group coordinators and China, as well as all other delegations and the secretariat.

As previous speakers have pointed out repeatedly in this forum, 1995 is an important year. It marks, in particular, the fiftieth anniversary of the establishment of the United Nations and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The coming Sunday, 5 March, marks the day on which the NPT came into force 25 years ago. Hence in less than seven weeks from now, the parties to the Treaty will meet to decide its future, namely whether the Treaty will continue in force indefinitely or be extended for an additional fixed period or periods. With the NPT review and extension Conference fast approaching, the attention of the international community is more and more focused on the work of this Conference on Disarmament. My predecessor Ambassador Yoshitomo Tanaka stated in his farewell address to the Conference that he was proud to have been a part of the CD. For my part, I hope to be able to say that I have had a good and productive four weeks when I hand over the presidency. Therefore, I pledge to my distinguished colleagues that I will do my best to discharge my challenging duties as President of the Conference with a view to achieving as much progress as possible in our work before the NPT Conference, and I hope to have constructive consultations with all delegations, especially through group coordinators, as well as with ad hoc committee chairmen and special coordinators to be appointed.

As the NPT is too important an issue to be passed by undiscussed, I should like to avail myself of this opportunity to state the Japanese view on this important treaty - in particular, why the Government of Japan decided to

(The President)

support the indefinite extension of the treaty, as was reaffirmed by Mr. Yohei Kono, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan at the United Nations General Assembly last September.

The vast majority of the world's States have become parties to the NPT. There are now 172 States parties. The NPT is crucial to our collective security and supplies a series of irreplaceable benefits, as follows. First, the NPT enhances regional and global security. Because of the NPT there is a legal basis for responses to the challenges to regional and global security posed by the violators of the Treaty. There would have been no legal basis in the absence of the NPT for the actions of the Security Council when Iraq's nuclear programme came to light. Because the nuclear issue of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is heading for a solution, the security of north-east Asia has been improved immeasurably. The practical and legal consequences of the NPT for national and regional security bear careful consideration.

Second, the NPT also sets out an agenda on behalf of global peace and security, in particular nuclear disarmament. The NPT is not a static arrangement. Article VI provides for dynamic progress that seeks the ultimate eradication of the category of nuclear-weapon States by the progressive elimination of nuclear weapons. Thereby, the NPT enshrines a principle of paramount importance, namely that all States parties, including the non-nuclear-weapon States, are required to "pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament". In addition, article VI sets out an agenda for achievement by all States parties of the ideal of "general and complete disarmament". Because of the NPT's article VI, meaningful negotiations towards a comprehensive nuclear-test-ban treaty are proceeding in this Conference on Disarmament. Similarly, efforts to begin negotiations on a cut-off treaty are in train here. As a result of Ukraine's accession to the NPT, START I has entered into force, and the Russian Federation and the United States have commenced preparations for the ratification of START II.

Third, the NPT provides assurances of the peaceful nature of national nuclear programmes. These assurances are provided through article III, which underpins the safeguards procedures administered by IAEA. Less than the full-scope safeguards do not provide the same measures of assurance. The NPT enshrines principles - in this case with regard to the application of safeguards and mechanisms to ensure responsible behaviour - that add to the security of the international community.

Fourth, the NPT established a principle in favour of the transfer of nuclear materials and technologies. Article IV of the NPT establishes a principle that is of genuine benefit, namely that all countries are to gain from the peaceful applications of nuclear energy and technologies.

Fifth, the NPT reinforces nuclear-weapon-free zones. Article VII of the NPT provides another substantial benefit to States parties - it provides a legal under-pinning to the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs).

(The President)

The norms of behaviour that NWFZs establish are significantly reinforced by the norm against the proliferation of nuclear weapons generally that is established by the NPT. Article VII lends credibility to NWFZs.

As mentioned above, without the NPT there would be no credible barrier to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Moreover, there would be no legal injunction favouring nuclear disarmament or the other benefits the treaty supplies. The significance of the NPT for the security of the international community is such that in the event that it should become no longer effective we would have no choice but to start its re-negotiation as soon as possible. It is highly doubtful that such negotiations would result in the full measure of the benefits that the NPT currently supplies.

For these reasons Japan decided to support the indefinite extension of the NPT. Of course, the Government of Japan is determined to contribute to the promotion of nuclear disarmament to which the States parties to the NPT have committed themselves. In this context I recall that the Secretary-General of the United Nations stated in his message to the Conference delivered at the beginning of this year's session that "further progress in the reduction of strategic nuclear arsenals of the United States and the Russian Federation is no longer beyond the reach of reality. I believe that this will enable other nuclear-weapon States to move the process of nuclear disarmament forward and make yet another contribution to the establishment of a safer world".

I should now like to share with you the Japanese views on the disarmament agenda items before us. With respect to a CTBT, my predecessor, as his last endeavour in the CD, urged the delegations to redouble their efforts to conclude the treaty as soon as possible. I simply endorse his statement and hope that further tangible progress will be made soon. Japan also attaches importance to the commencement of the negotiations on a cut-off treaty. I look forward to hearing a heartening report from Ambassador Shannon of Canada. With respect to the issue of negative security assurances (NSA), I hope that the accomplishments in NSA and possibly also in PSA (positive security assurances) will be achieved soon. Arms control and disarmament in the field of conventional weapons is also important. As a first step towards fully addressing this issue, Japan took the initiative jointly with the European countries in establishing the United Nations Register of Conventional Arms. The Register has witnessed a promising start. Japan hopes that its participation will be widened steadily so as to promote confidence-building on a global basis. Likewise we attach importance to discussing transparency in armaments in the CD. Of course, the Japanese delegation is ready to discuss with other delegations the issues relating to conventional weapons in general. As regards the issue of prevention of an arms race in outer space, we are willing to listen to the views of other delegations with a view to finding a way to proceed with this issue.

Last but not least, we should seek progress in the issues of the agenda and the expansion of the CD. Japan particularly attaches importance to early realization of a substantial expansion of the Conference, in view, in particular, of the overdue aspirations of the applicants for membership as well as their contributions to the work of the Conference.

(The President)

Having said all this in my national capacity, I pledge myself to be as impartial and accommodating as possible as your President, and I am determined to do my best for the purpose of achieving our common objectives. I look forward to enjoying positive cooperation from all of you.

I should now like to give the floor to His Excellency the Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary, Ambassador André Erdös.

Mr. ERDÖS (Hungary): Madam President, allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of the high post of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. Our congratulations also go to your predecessor, Ambassador Alessandro Vattani of Italy, for his skilful guidance of our activities during the crucial starting phase of the 1995 session, which enabled the Conference to resume it substantive work at an early stage. I also extend our greetings to the Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Vladimir Petrovsky, and the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference on Disarmament, Mr. Abdelkader Bensmail.

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons entered into force on 5 March 1970. It is a special occasion to address the Conference on Disarmament on the eve of this important anniversary. In spite of - and, I might add, because of - the profound transformation in recent years of the agenda for a new international security system, the NPT continues to be the major international legal instrument that provides a basic guarantee for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons worldwide. We are deeply convinced that the international community cannot fail to ensure that the NPT prevails and remains an essential part of the emerging new system of international relations. Hungary is thus keenly interested in strengthening the Treaty and in making it of unlimited duration without linking this act to additional conditions. My Government is ready to contribute to achieving this important goal.

We cannot but note with great satisfaction that the universality of the Treaty has significantly been enhanced through the recent accession of a number of countries, notably Ukraine, Algeria and Argentina. We consider the decision of Ukraine in this regard as a most encouraging event strengthening stability in our region and reinforcing our expectation that no additional nuclear-weapon States will emerge on the territory of the former Soviet Union.

The international community has become more attentive to the risks of proliferation of all categories of weapons of mass destruction and has shown its determination to act against those risks at both global and regional levels. Hungary, acting as Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe for 1995, will do its best in order to use the potential of this regional arrangement to promote the goal of non-proliferation. In this respect, OSCE participating States can draw on the decision on principles governing non-proliferation, which is an integral part of the Budapest Document adopted by the heads of State and government at the CSCE summit in December 1994. In it, the participating States expressed their strong belief that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and

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missiles to deliver them, poses a threat to international peace, security and stability. In this context, they expressed their strong commitment that the NPT should be fully implemented, indefinitely and unconditionally extended. They spoke out against the acquisition, development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical and biological weapons.

The OSCE member States are also committed to control the transfer of missiles capable of delivering weapons of mass destruction and their components and technology. They undertook to control the export of such items in accordance with the guidelines of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and the annexes to them, and to encourage efforts to ensure that interested participating States become adherents to MTCR. This comprehensive programme of action of OSCE proves that regional arrangements under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations have an important role to play in enhancing the effectiveness of endeavours undertaken at the global level in the field of non-proliferation.

1995 is widely expected to be an exceptional year not only for the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, but also from the point of view of positive developments in other related fields. There is no doubt that the success of the present session of the Conference on Disarmament will be judged on the basis of the progress this body is able to achieve in the course of its negotiations on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. Hungary disagrees with the proposition seeking to establish rigid linkages between the unlimited extension of the NPT and achievements in other negotiations. At the same time, the overall trend of the work of the Conference these days will certainly contribute to creating a favourable international environment for the upcoming review and extension Conference. In this context Hungary would like to put on record her utmost interest in achieving in the NTB Ad Hoc Committee as much progress as possible during the remaining weeks of the first part of the 1995 session.

Speaking more broadly, we also hope that by the end of the year the members of the Conference on Disarmament will be able to find compromises on such contentious issues as scope and basic obligations, entry into force, duration or on-site inspections and the related trigger mechanism, just to mention the most important ones. Decisions on mutually acceptable concessions are not always easy to take but they are inevitable if we are to succeed. We may need further initiatives and new approaches aimed at speeding up the course of negotiations. The decision of the United States to drop its proposal for a special right to withdraw from the CTBT is a good example to this effect which, hopefully, will set a pattern of responsible and flexible attitude on behalf of a nuclear Power in the ongoing NTB process. We call on delegations to further contribute to concerted actions on issues yet unresolved.

As Hungary has already outlined several times, our basic objective is to have an effective treaty on a comprehensive nuclear test ban. The Hungarian position is that the goals and purposes of this legal instrument can best be promoted and implemented through a self-contained organization, which, however, will draw on the expertise and the existing infrastructure of a major international organization, namely IAEA. The possible co-location of the two

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organizations deserves our most serious consideration. It follows from the aforesaid that my Government has a strong preference for Vienna as the seat of the future CTBT organization. We welcome the offer of the Government of Austria to this end.

Another CTBT-related issue is the question of the funding of the international monitoring system (IMS) consisting of facilities established and run jointly or nationally by the member States. The experience of other international organizations in the field of financing tells us that there is a wide range of possibilities to elaborate a cost-sharing formula accommodating various concerns and tailored to the capacity of individual States to cover the expenses. The Hungarian delegation is open to any solution which ensures equitable burden-sharing and clearly defines the obligations of the organization, on the one hand, and those of the individual States hosting IMS facilities, on the other.

Another aspect of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation my Government attaches great importance to is the prohibition of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear devices. The lack, in certain States, of accountancy and physical protection systems meeting international standards has given rise to increasing diversion and illicit traffic in sensitive weapon-grade material. It is against this background that Hungary advocates the early establishment of an ad hoc committee on "cut-off". The activities of the Friend of the Chair, Ambassador Gerald Shannon of Canada, deserve our highest appreciation and further support. In our view, a mandate based on United Nations General Assembly resolution 48/75 L, co-sponsored by Hungary, could provide an appropriate point of departure for the future negotiations.

While concentrating carefully on the nuclear test ban, and, as we hope, on "cut-off" in parallel, other items on the agenda should not be rendered insignificant, either. I take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's position that States renouncing the nuclear option in an internationally and legally binding form and acting in full compliance with their obligations have a legitimate right to be assured against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. In our view, the optimum format for security assurances would be a legally binding, multilaterally negotiated international agreement. Such a legal instrument, by nature, will have to be based on mutual obligations by both the nuclear-weapon States and the non-nuclear-weapon ones. We regard the Ad Hoc Committee on negative security assurances as an appropriate negotiating forum and are prepared to contribute to its work, once re-established.

The item of transparency in armaments was high on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament last year. We firmly believe that such a crucial issue cannot be treated the way it has been. It is so not only because transparency and openness should be of high priority in the new security environment of the post-cold-war era. The Conference on Disarmament has at least two additional reasons and incentives to continue to tackle this issue in an Ad Hoc Committee. The first, in our view, is the obvious imbalance between nuclear- and conventional-weapons-related items in the deliberations of the CD. This situation is most unjustified when the real threat of a nuclear war between the great Powers has clearly receded and the number of

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regional conflicts fought by conventional weapons has dramatically increased. Secondly, the Conference cannot afford to lose the momentum of the relevant discussions over the last three years on the many proposals submitted in a great number of working papers still awaiting consideration. Due to the limited time available, most of the ideas contained in these documents could not have been considered in depth and, no doubt, merit further examination. The better understanding of the often diverging positions is also an asset the Conference can benefit from.

Two years ago, the international community took note with satisfaction of the fact that the Czech Republic and Slovakia were able to solve the problems arising from the dissolution of a State in a peaceful and civilized manner, which unfortunately has proved to be rather an exception than a rule in the post-cold-war era. The two States had practically no difficulties to be admitted to all those international organizations and forums where the former Czechoslovakia used to be a member. This was done either jointly or in accordance with their bilateral agreement. The only case when one of the successor States regrettably failed to receive this treatment and the seat of a country that parted into its constituent republics was the Conference on Disarmament. Last month the Conference could see an emerging consensus in this issue. In this situation, we once again urge delegations to consider the application of Slovakia favourably and materialize the prevailing political will for welcoming this country in our midst. The CD as an autonomous body is fully authorized to do so. By the solution of this question, the Conference could send a positive message to the international community demonstrating its ability to address membership issues in a flexible and constructive manner. The significant expansion of the membership of the CD, in our view, could not be postponed any more without running the risk of undermining its credibility. The early admission of new members could facilitate the more effective implementation of the legal instruments elaborated by this body. Hungary is prepared to consider favourably the admission of all States which have registered their candidacy in due form. Alternatively, we are also open to start the process of expansion on the basis of any agreed and balanced list commanding consensus or in any other appropriate manner. In our view, the Conference on Disarmament should live up, in all respects, to the expectations focused on its activities by the international community.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Deputy State Secretary at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Hungary for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now give the floor to the distinguished representative of Norway, Ambassador Skogmo.

Mr. SKOGMO (Norway): Madam President, first of all, I would like to congratulate you, Ambassador Kurokochi, on your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament at this crucial period for global disarmament. The Conference is charged by the international community to negotiate agreement on the important global disarmament issues before us, foremost among them a nuclear-test-ban treaty. The aspirations of a growing number of nations seeking membership, now outnumbering the actual members, also bear witness to the importance of the Conference on Disarmament. I pledge my delegation's full support to your efforts to move ahead on the issues before us. I also take this opportunity to congratulate

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Ambassador Dembinski on his election to the Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on NTB, as well as the working group chairmen, Ambassador Norberg of Sweden and Ambassador Ramaker of the Netherlands. They will also need the wholehearted support of all delegations in order to make speedy progress toward a negotiated text for the CTBT.

The primary objective of the Conference on Disarmament must now be to conclude negotiations on a comprehensive test-ban treaty as soon as possible. We are pleased that the CD managed to get off to a good start for the CTBT negotiations this year. But this does not mean that we can neglect other issues on the agenda of the Conference. Norway believes that the Conference should re-establish the ad hoc groups from last year, and make every effort to launch negotiations on a cut-off convention. In our view, momentum gained in one area could have positive effects in others, particularly as many of the subjects are related. It is both possible and necessary to initiate negotiations on other issues before the Conference, while we maintain a special focus on those issues which are most pressing.

The political focus in 1995 will be on the extension of the non-proliferation Treaty. My Government believes the NPT forms the most important element in the barrier against nuclear proliferation. The NPT helps to provide stability in international security both on a global and on a regional level. For this reason it deserves to be extended indefinitely, without any preconditions or linkages, and should become a truly universal treaty. Norway has for many years held the view that a CTBT will supplement and strengthen the NPT. Visible progress towards a CTBT in the months ahead, with a view to speedy conclusion and entry into force, will be a logical and politically important complement to the NPT. In this context, negative security assurances provided jointly by the nuclear-weapons States will also be an important supplement to the NPT. We hope that tangible NSAs will be provided by the nuclear-weapon States before the beginning of the NPT review and extension meeting in April.

The CTBT negotiations are making welcome progress. The rolling text is now into its second reading, although important substantial issues remain to be tackled. The ad hoc group under the chairmanship of Ambassadors Marín Bosch and Dembinski has been making steady headway. Technically difficult verification issues have been clarified. Agreement seems to be at hand on the basic verification methods, thanks in large extent to the persistent efforts by Dr. Peter Marshall and his team of experts, as well as by Dr. Ola Dahlman and the Group of Scientific Experts.

The scope of the Treaty is obviously a key issue. Norway's position on scope remains unchanged. We believe that a test-ban treaty should prohibit all nuclear explosions in all environments. The definitions in the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 provide, in our opinion, a goods basis for the CTBT definitions, with the necessary addition of underground explosions. The verification system would be based on at least four agreed methods, with the possible complement of others. We agree that a system based on seismological methods, infrasound, hydroacoustic and radionuclide monitoring would give a satisfactory basis for ensuring compliance with the treaty. The system should be configured with a view to establishing cost-effective coverage to pick up

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realistic explosion levels, that is, larger than 1 kiloton. Synergies between the various methods should be exploited to the extent possible in order to bring down costs for installation and operation.

The GSETT-3 experiment, with broad participation, is now up and running. We understand that it is already delivering concrete results that can be directly used to assess the performance of the seismic component of a future international CTBT monitoring system. GSETT-3 will provide useful training for personnel around the world in seismic verification skills and will give valuable experience in all aspects of the operation of a global monitoring system. We consider it very important to ensure a smooth transition from the operation of the GSETT-3 network to the network that will eventually serve to verify compliance with a future CTBT. Norway is contributing fully to GSETT-3 and is prepared to maintain this effort.

Let me underline one issue which is of particular importance to my country. Running expenses for the IDC and for the network that provides data for verification purposes should be carried by the parties on the basis of the United Nations scale of assessment. International funding for verification activities is important in order to ensure an equitable distribution of costs and to avoid placing unreasonable economic burdens on countries whose participation, for arbitrary geographical reasons, is essential for obtaining adequate global coverage. It would also facilitate the establishment of new seismic stations at appropriate locations and would help ensure that all stations and communication links can be operated to the required standards. Reliability and quality of the station network would also benefit from common funding and acquisition.

We have observed with great satisfaction the good cooperation that has developed over the last two years between dedicated experts and scientists that have been reinforcing the negotiating teams and the diplomatic negotiating framework of the CD, especially in the field of the CTBT. This tandem effort could in the future be emulated for other negotiating tasks facing the Conference. The next treaty on the CD's negotiating horizon should in our view be the conclusion of a convention on the cut-off of production of fissile material for weapons purposes. Regrettably, agreement on a negotiating mandate has so far eluded Ambassador Shannon's steady efforts as Special Coordinator to establish a consensus on this issue. We understand that the sticking-point is related to the extent of the scope of the negotiations. We would hope that the issue of present stocks of fissile material will not be the stumbling-block that upsets possible negotiations in the CD on a treaty to halt future production of fissile material for weapons purposes.

Norway agrees that the Conference on Disarmament has a special responsibility to deal with weapons of mass destruction, including the nuclear issues. My delegation finds it regrettable, and even surprising, that the acute problem of conventional disarmament is not dealt with directly by the CD, however. An increasing number of armed conflicts around the globe, with untold suffering to civil societies and the innocent civilian population, is fuelled by the proliferation and build-up of conventional armaments. Small arms proliferate with little government control. Land-mines maim civilians

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and make vast tracts of land unfit for cultivation for generations. Against this background it is surprising that the CD has yet to re-establish the Ad Hoc Committee on transparency in armaments, the only item on the CD agenda where conventional armaments are being addressed, albeit indirectly.

The problem of expansion of the Conference has been on the agenda for more than a decade, with no solution at hand. My country has twice in this period been on a short list of new members, believing each time that membership would follow quickly. Twice our accession has been hindered by a blocking of other nations on the short list. The General Assembly of the United Nations, which helped reform the present Conference on Disarmament, passed a consensus resolution last year (resolution 49/77 B), again pointing out the urgency of the CD finding a solution to the problem of expansion. My delegation feels it is time that the Conference in all seriousness address and solve the expansion question. A solution that pleases all may not be achievable in the short term. The Conference could nevertheless break the present impasse by considering admitting those countries on which there is agreement, while full admittance for all applicants could be phased over some time. I can reiterate the readiness of my country to take on the responsibilities that follow from membership in the CD, the only global negotiating forum for disarmament.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Norway for his statement and for the kind words addressed to me. I now have pleasure in giving the floor to the distinguished representative of Indonesia, Ambassador Brotodiningrat. However, before doing so, allow me to express the regret of this Conference at his imminent departure. In his nearly four years with the Conference, Ambassador Brotodiningrat has contributed in a significant way to the achievements of this forum. I have in mind, in particular, his active involvement in the final stages of the negotiation of the chemical weapons Convention, when he skilfully and tirelessly narrowed positions and brought a solution to the thorny issue of "old stocks", as well as his own presidency of the Conference last year, which was memorably polished, I understand. While taking this opportunity to wish Ambassador Brotodiningrat and his family every success and happiness for the future, I take it that I speak on behalf of everyone here in expressing our sense of loss at his departure. Ambassador Brotodiningrat, you have the floor.

Mr. BROTODININGRAT (Indonesia): Madam President, please allow me at the outset to warmly welcome you and, at the same time, to congratulate you upon your assumption of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. It is widely recognized that the early stage of the Conference's annual session is always very difficult. However, knowing your personal qualities I am fully confident that apart from the prompt establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee on NTB, all the remaining issues listed in the Presidential statement of 31 January can soon be resolved. To this end, my delegation pledges its full cooperation in helping you to discharge your demanding tasks. I should also like to use this occasion to thank your predecessor, Ambassador Vattani of Italy, for the excellent manner with which he conducted our work during the previous month.

(Mr. Brotodiningrat, Indonesia)

I am also pleased that, while counting my few remaining days in Geneva, I still have the opportunity to welcome our newly arrived colleagues, the distinguished Ambassadors from Brazil, China, Morocco and Myanmar, representing countries with which Indonesia enjoys excellent relations. We trust that they will bring with them fresh ideas and a renewed positive spirit that will be most beneficial in revamping even further the work and productivity of the Conference.

At a time when I am about to take leave from the Conference on Disarmament, I am overwhelmed by mixed feelings. Looking back at the past, I cannot but feel gratified to share the pride of the Conference for its major achievement, namely the successful conclusion of the chemical weapons Convention, a success which I hope will soon be completed by the required enabling ratification. On the other hand, the past has also unfortunately left me with a sense of discouragement, particularly when it comes to some unfinished business such as the problem of membership expansion, the question of the agenda and the quest for improved and effective functioning of the Conference. I can only wish that collective wisdom and common resolve will soon prevail within the Conference to settle these issues.

Turning to the present, I feel it is somewhat regrettable to have to leave the Conference precisely at a time when it is actively pursuing its major mandate to negotiate and conclude the absolutely essential CTBT. The great importance that Indonesia attaches to a CTBT is well known, so that the very least I can do at this juncture is to express the earnest hope that the Conference will succeed in concluding the CTBT in the very near future. For failing to do so could bring us back to the not so distant past when the use, or threat of use, of these horrendous weapons brought the world so close to the danger of conflagration.

Regrettably, I am also going to miss other major events in disarmament, in particular the review and extension Conference of the NPT. On this I can only anxiously await from afar the good news that finally the international community has reached a consensus on this crucially important matter.

To conclude, allow me to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude to all my distinguished colleagues and dear friends for their cooperation and friendship during my term representing Indonesia in the Conference on Disarmament. I assure them that all the wisdom I have had the privilege to absorb from them has made my three and half years' assignment in Geneva a most rewarding one, while their kindness has made it most enjoyable. In the same vein, I should not fail to express my most sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and to all the secretariat staff, not to forget the conference officers and interpreters, for their most valuable assistance, which has greatly facilitated the discharge of my duties. Finally, instead of bidding farewell, let me just say till we meet again, hopefully under even better circumstances.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Indonesia for his statement as well as for the kind words he has addressed to me. That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other delegation wish to take the floor?

Mr. ERRERA (France) (translated from French): Madam President, as I welcome you among us I am delighted to see you presiding over the Conference on Disarmament. Your experience, the fact that you represent a great country, the fact that you are looking at things with a new eye, all auger well for success in your important task. You may therefore be sure of the full support and friendship of the French delegation. I would also like to pay very special tribute to my friend Ambassador Alessandro Vattani for the exemplary way, the intelligence, the courage and the competence with which he directed our work at a critical moment, in particularly difficult conditions, without ever losing his courtesy, his elegance and his natural humour. We thank him for this once again.

I wish to take the floor briefly to announce to the Conference on Disarmament that the Government of the French Republic, following a unanimous vote by the French Parliament, deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations yesterday, 2 March 1995, its instrument of ratification of the Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on Their Destruction. France thus confirms the major importance it attaches to this Convention, which was opened for signature in Paris on 13 January 1993. The Conference on Disarmament can be proud of having been the architect of this first internationally verifiable multilateral disarmament treaty. France hopes that the Convention will be speedily ratified by all member and observer States in the Conference on Disarmament, so as to enable it to enter into force as quickly as possible. The implementation of this treaty will constitute a very important step forward in the field of disarmament and will strengthen international peace and security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of France for his statement and also for bringing us this very good news. I now recognize the distinguished representative of Iraq, who has asked for the floor.

Mr. AL-KHERO (Iraq) (translated from Arabic): Madam Chairman, allow me to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference. My country's delegation is confident that you will conduct the work of the Conference in the best possible manner by virtue of your background and experience. In your statement about the importance of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, Madam, you dealt with the legal basis that this treaty provides in order to meet the challenges to regional and international security which are created by violations of this treaty, and you mentioned the Iraqi nuclear programme. You are aware that this programme has been destroyed in accordance with Security Council resolution 687, and here my country's delegation would like to point out that the legal basis provided by international conventions and treaties, including the non-proliferation Treaty, is not sufficient to maintain regional and international security if it is not accompanied by comprehensive application far removed from the double standards and selectivity which have been and are still being applied against my country. My country's delegation hopes that the international instruments will be respected in a comprehensive manner and that the spirit of the provisions and texts of such instruments and their legal interpretations will

(Mr. Al-Khero, Iraq)

be applied without being influenced by any specific political viewpoint. If we do this, then we will have established a sound basis for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished representative of Iraq for his statement and also for the kind words addressed to me. Are there any other speakers who wish to take the floor? I see none.

I should now like to take up the request from Kazakhstan to participate in the work of the Conference. Consultations have revealed that it would be acceptable to delegations to take up this request directly in a plenary meeting without going into an informal meeting, on the understanding that this does not create a precedent for future, similar requests. This request has been circulated to all delegations in document CD/WP.464, which is now before you. May I take it that the Conference accepts this request? I see no objection.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: The secretariat, at my request, has circulated a tentative revised timetable of meetings to be held by the Conference next week. It was prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee on a Nuclear Test Ban, is merely indicative and subject to change if necessary. On this understanding, may I consider that the timetable is acceptable?

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: Thanks to the untiring efforts of my predecessor, Ambassador Vattani of Italy, the Conference was able to adopt its agenda and start, without delay, substantive work on a comprehensive test-ban treaty. I have the benefit of inheriting the accomplishments of the previous President. However, I am aware and concerned that important issues outlined in the Presidential statement of 3 February (CD/1294), covering the agenda and organization of the 1995 session, remain unresolved. In particular, we need to consider the possibility of re-establishing, as soon as possible, the ad hoc committees on negative security assurances, transparency in armaments and prevention of an arms race in outer space, as well as the possibility of establishing any other ad hoc committees which may be agreed on following further consultations. We will also need to appoint special coordinators on expansion of membership of the Conference as well as on review of the agenda. We should also bear in mind the question relating to consultations on the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. Further, as you are aware, Ambassador Shannon of Canada is actively seeking agreement on a mandate for an ad hoc committee on prohibition of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other nuclear explosive devices, and I hope that his efforts will be rewarded by positive results. Finally, we will need to continue our consideration of the request made by the Slovak Republic for membership in the Conference. As you know, I have already started

(The President)

consultations on all of these issues and I can assure you that I will spare no effort in trying to bring about early agreement. At the same time, I would encourage individual delegations, as well as groups of delegations, to consult among themselves in order to bring about solutions acceptable to all. I hope that solutions can be found and that we succeed in addressing our differences through serious dialogue and cooperation with patience and in a spirit of understanding.

The next plenary meeting will be held on Thursday, 9 March 1995 at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 11.10 a.m.